GLEN GREHAN

The Saint Thomas, Bodhisattva Archive:

Faith, Suffering, and the Middle Way

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Glen Grehan asserts the moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

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1

Foreword

The Faith, Suffering and the Middle Way is written for people who can no longer make easy sense of God, suffering, and the modern world, but who also refuse the cheap comfort of simple unbelief. It asks whether there is a path between denial and denialism: a way to take pain seriously without making it the whole story, and to take faith seriously without shutting down thought.

A Different Kind Of Faith

This work does not treat faith as mental assent to doctrines or a ticket to heaven. Faith here is closer to a lived confidence: the capacity to stake oneself into the future, to keep walking when outcomes are uncertain, and to believe that the divine remains

present even when institutions, leaders, or inherited images of God have failed. The book draws on Christ and the Buddha as parallel models, not competitors, and invites the reader to imagine their lives from the inside out, how they thought, chose, and endured, rather than only reciting their words.

Suffering Without Sentimentality

Suffering is not romanticized, but neither is it treated as a glitch that a positive mindset or a new practice will quickly erase. Everyday griefs, a toxic job, family conflict, depression, addiction, social humiliation, are taken as serious spiritual data, not distractions from real religious life. The text keeps asking hard questions that most devotional writing avoids: When does *we are all sinners* become an excuse for never changing? When does victim-hood harden into self-pity? When does talk of God's will mask simple human negligence or cruelty?

The Middle Way As Practice

The middle way offered here is not a vague balance but a concrete discipline: to suffer and to cultivate peace in the heart at the same time. That means learning to let go of unhealthy attachments (to money, status, grievances, even certain relationships) while still caring fiercely about justice, family, and the vulnerable. It also means recognizing that both religious extremism and shallow secular optimism are forms of avoidance, one hides behind rule-keeping and repetition, the other behind endless distraction and positivity, and choosing instead a path of courageous, often uncomfortable honesty.

What This Book Hopes To Do

Readers will not find a system or a new church here, but a set of sharp, lived reflections that keep pointing back to the same place: the Kingdom of God is within, and any real transformation must start there. The hope is that, by the final page, faith feels less like agreeing with sentences about God and more like sharing in Christ-consciousness, a quiet, stubborn willingness to develop peace in the midst of pain, to act with courage in the midst of fear, and to keep walking the middle way when every loud voice demands an easier extreme.

2

Preface

I've considered myself a good Christian my entire life, and like a lot of people, I've needed forgiveness from time to time, and I have left many things undone. I was even an atheist at one point! When I was very young, though, I already had an inquisitive mind. I remember not really believing the story of the loaves and the fishes. It just didn't seem possible to me. So I prayed to God and said, "If you're real, how will I know?"

The next day, I woke up having had a dream of my entire day, exactly as it then unfolded. I was only ten years old. From that day on, I was completely stuck to God. All of my thoughts and feelings were filtered through one question: what would God think? That became my reference point, growing up in a Western Christian country.

I had attended Catholic day school and a Presbyterian Sunday

school, which had been very, very influential on me. Later in life, I came to align myself with the Church of Ireland.

Deep down, though, I am a Buddhist. Buddhism is who I am; it's my personality. The Noble Eight-fold Path really helped me to live ethically and to transcend the desire to make money at any cost, or to cheat, manipulate, or steal, those base-level, trivial things. The Noble Eight-fold Path is fundamentally who I am.

I'm also naturally inclined toward philosophy. I'm a deep thinker. I haven't studied academically, but deep, penetrating concentration can be a form of study in itself. I've also always loved science. It was probably a misquote about Einstein, yet it stuck with me: that avoiding formal university study helped him stay radical. I wouldn't compare myself to Einstein, but the idea resonated with me. For that reason, I chose not to study theology at university, even though it would have been the most natural path for me. It was my second choice, but I didn't pursue it.

In the end, I succumbed to the base-level desire to make money and attempted to study accountancy.

When I started writing the Philosophical Theology blog, people often asked me for advice and for my wisdom. I gave what I believe was good advice, and over time that naturally became a blog.

This blog was written under a pseudonym. With so much of our lives exposed online, writing this way feels both practical and freeing. Perplexity AI is a natural assistant for anyone involved in academic research. It provides very clean, simple, and accessible commentary on my blog posts. The longer-form content appears as reels on Instagram and YouTube, with shorter versions as tweets. I started on Twitter, then moved to

Instagram, and finally to YouTube in the spoken word. All of this is available under the same handle @bodhisattvast

3

Introduction

This book is for someone who is tired of self-help platitudes, suspicious of institutional religion, but still hungry for God and moral seriousness will recognize that voice and stay with it.

The pieces are deliberately brief. Each one tries to leave the reader with a question rather than a slogan, something to test against a real relationship, habit, or decision. Read them as invitations: to stop hiding behind theology, to notice the structures you are building with your words and choices, and to move, imperfectly but honestly, toward a life that matches the Kingdom within.

Most mainstream self-help promises fast results, simplifies psychology into steps, and avoids moral depth so as not to alienate

readers. This book insists that behavior is morally charged and that change demands honesty, sacrifice, and sustained attention rather than hacks. That makes it slower to digest but also more durable: the ideas are memorable, re-readable, and capable of unsettling people, which is where real growth usually begins.

Stylistically, the short-form chapters match modern attention spans, but the density of metaphor and argument means readers cannot skim them for *tips* and feel finished. As a result, this sits closer to spiritual reflection or moral essay than to standard self-help; its strength is depth and seriousness, its weakness (commercially) is that it will not comfort people who want quick validation.

Chapter One dismantles the idea of faith as mere belief and re-frames it as a lived confidence that God believes in human potential at least as much as humans claim to believe in God.

Chapter Two here the classic problem of evil is turned from an abstract puzzle into a practical question: what does it mean to trust God in a world where intervention is rare and suffering is widespread?

Chapter Three explores how everyday dishonesty, small lies, performance, self-editing, erodes the inner temple where genuine spiritual life is meant to take place.

Chapter Four the focus shifts to the subtle ways freedom is traded away: for comfort, approval, ideology, or institutional belonging.

Chapter Five critiques the church of positivity, where branding, media, and self-help language sugar-coat structural problems and discourage deep thought.

Chapter Six here prayer is presented less as reciting words and more as tuning the whole life towards God, with music and artistic discipline as concrete ways of doing so.

In the social-media spiritual space, much content is either aesthetic positivity (high vibes only), de-contextualized quotes, or rigid doctrinal posting. This book cuts across those patterns by combining Christian and Buddhist language, addressing masculinity, politics, economics, and addiction, and repeatedly returning to honesty, volition, and responsibility as spiritual essentials. That breadth and moral weight make the voice distinctive; it feels like a person who has lived with real conflict and is uninterested in branding, which is rare.

However, the account is also demanding: it assumes a reasonably literate, reflective reader and offers little in the way of personal backstory or *relatable* vulnerability that algorithms tend to reward. So in pure engagement metrics it may underperform more polished or emotionally theatrical creators, but in terms of substance it sits in the upper tier of serious lay spiritual commentary.

For readers who are disillusioned with glossy spirituality yet not ready to give up on faith, this work is genuinely valuable and significantly stronger than the average quick read or inspirational feed.

4

Faith, Sin, And Theology

The most frequent theme in modern Christian discourse is that we are all sinners and the Lord forgives everybody. This is undoubtedly true, the Lord's forgiveness passes all understanding. But modern Christians must begin to ask an intrinsic question: when are they going to stop feeling sorry for themselves? When are they going to pull up their socks and stop doing things that are wrong?

Life is tough, for sure, but it really is not that bad. I mean, if anyone should ever meet the Supreme Being, there is a lot more God can do than forgiveness. There are a lot of great things happening in the Kingdom of

> Heaven.

Why this piece matters

This reel goes after a central slogan of contemporary Christianity: we are all sinners and the Lord forgives everybody. It shows how that sentence, while theologically true, is often used to justify inertia, self-pity, and repeated wrongdoing rather than repentance and growth.

The core move

The reel first affirms that God's forgiveness "passes all understanding," then asks a blunt question: when are people going to stop feeling sorry for themselves and actually stop doing what they know is wrong. It pushes the listener to imagine meeting the Supreme Being and realizing that God can do far more for them than merely forgive, there is an entire Kingdom of Heaven full of possibilities that they are ignoring by staying stuck in their sins.

What it asks the reader

- Do I treat forgiveness as a warm bath I return to after repeating the same patterns, or as the starting gun for a changed life?
- If I really believed God could do a lot more for me than forgive, what habit or sin would I finally give up instead of nursing it?
- Am I secretly more attached to the comfort of being a victim than to the dignity of becoming a responsible child of God?

> What does it mean to have faith in God? Christians walk into a church, confess that they believe in God, and then, bang, off to Heaven they go. It's bizarre, really.
>
> If you consider a coach and you're at the sideline ready to go on, the coach says, "I have faith in you." You're dressed in uniform, you're about to embark on a challenge, about to enter an arena. That statement is more than a description of events. To have faith in you is a deeper inner belief in what you can do, what you're capable of, what might happen.
>
> So we know what faith is going downwards. Faith going upwards must be the very same. Christians need to be more active, more engaged.

Why this piece matters

This reel attacks the idea that faith is just intellectual assent, saying *I believe in God* and assuming that is enough for heaven. It re-frames faith as lived trust and engagement, using imagery from sport and coaching that most readers can feel viscerally.

The core move

The reel compares a coach on the sideline saying "I have faith in you" to a player: the words only make sense because the player is in uniform, entering an arena, about to risk success or failure. From there it argues that Christians have mis-applied the word faith upwards: if faith from coach to player means

risk-laden confidence in action, then faith from human to God must also be more than a bare statement; it is an ongoing, active entrusting of life, choices, and effort.

What it asks the reader

- Where in my actual week does my claimed *faith* force me to act differently, at some personal cost?
- Am I content being a spectator who chants the right slogans, or am I willing to be the player whose life is visibly on the line?
- If God were the coach, what would it look like for me to finally *go on the pitch* instead of standing forever at the sideline of belief?

> The upper end of Christian theology, steep and mind bending in nature, is better left at the conference halls and lecture theaters
>
> To stay in the moment while deepening ones understanding, it's easier to move laterally through Buddhist and Vedic interpretations of spiritualities perplexing side.

Why this piece matters

This tweet questions the social function of high-end, abstract theology that rarely touches ordinary believers. It protects faith

from being captured by professionals who debate at heights that offer little nourishment to people trying to pray, work, and raise families.

The core move

The tweet contrasts the "upper end" of Christian theology, dense, speculative, often removed from daily experience, with the simple, demanding path laid down by Christ. Its implicit claim is that God's desires are not hidden in academic footnotes; they are clear enough that someone without formal training can understand that God wants people to flourish, repent, act justly and courageously.

What it asks the reader

- Have I confused complexity with holiness, assuming that the most tangled arguments must be the deepest?
- Does the teaching I consume actually help me love God and neighbor in concrete situations, or does it only inflate my sense of being *in the know?*
- If I stripped my faith back to what Christ clearly asks, what practices would survive and what would fall away?

> Having a single, one-tracked mind is essential to success. You need to be fixated on a goal of importance to get over the finish line. Any really successful person will say that, you know, on a TEDx talk or whatever.

> But being fixed in your thinking is something that's totally different. You need to be flexible. We need to be adaptive.
>
> When we think about Christianity, there is a fixation on vulnerable groups in society. I love vulnerable people. I care passionately and deeply about the least affected in society. And God's love passes all understanding. But destitution and suffering are not the end goal. God is a loving Father, and you do not need to be a theologian to understand that God wants us to flourish.

Why this piece matters

The Darwinism reel takes on a common distortion in Christian ethics: the fixation on vulnerability and suffering as if they were the goal rather than the starting point. It reasserts that God, as a loving Father, is fundamentally oriented toward human flourishing, not permanent destitution or victim-hood.

The core move

The reel begins by honoring the truth that serious achievement often requires a one-tracked mind; focus on a demanding goal is necessary for success. Then it draws a distinction: being single-minded about a worthy objective is very different from being rigid in thinking. Applied to Christianity, it criticizes a culture that orients everything around vulnerable groups while quietly assuming that staying broken is holier. Against this, it insists that God's love for the vulnerable includes the desire that

they move into stability, strength, and joy.

What it asks the reader

- Do I secretly believe that to be holy I must remain permanently wounded, poor, or stuck?

- In my own life or activism, am I aiming only to preserve people in their suffering, or to help them cross into real flourishing?

- If God truly wants me to grow, what long-standing area of weakness am I treating as an identity instead of a phase to live through and beyond?

5

God, Suffering, And Non-Intervention

> If God intervened at every moment to make things better, to free us from despair, that would be heaven, not earth. Controlling behavior is coercive. When we love someone we set them free. Volition is central to our independence and growth.

Why this piece matters

This piece faces the oldest question in spiritual life: if God is loving, why doesn't God keep stepping in to fix everything. It refuses both the sentimental answer (God secretly fixes more

than you think) and the despairing answer (God must not care), and instead draws a hard line between earth and heaven. It protects human freedom and growth from being swallowed by a demand for constant rescue.

The core move

The central claim is that if God intervened at every moment to make things better and to free us from despair, that would no longer be earth; it would be heaven. Earth is precisely the realm where God's presence is real but not overwhelming, where agency and risk remain. Non-intervention is not negligence but a condition of a world in which choice, courage, and love can mean anything at all.

What it asks the reader

- When I rage that God has not fixed this situation, am I asking for comfort or for the removal of my own freedom?
- If earth is not meant to be heaven, how might my expectations of safety and ease need to change?
- Where in my life am I being invited to act, rather than wait for a miracle that would, in effect, turn me back into a child?

> Should the bacteria inside our body ever develop intelligence enough to figure out that they exist within a network of cells and organs, it is unrealistic their discovery could determine that she wears a hat or he

> has fluffy eyebrows
>
> Similarly, while we can feel God's essence in our lives, we cannot know what God does with the remainder of God's essence. God's intention and desires as it were. Our instructions are clear, and we have a thorough pathway through Christ and the Buddha
>
> Why bother with all this? God's desires, intent or instructions? What's the point? Maturity tells us, with little exception, parents always know better than children.

Why this piece matters

The bacteria thread is a disciplined act of humility about what humans can and cannot know of God. It attacks a very modern temptation: to treat God as an object of total analysis, as if enough thinking could map the mind and agenda of the divine. At the same time, it honors the reality of God's presence and the reliability of the guidance that *has* been given.

The core move

The analogy is simple and sharp: bacteria living inside a human body could, at best, discover that they inhabit a complex system of cells, organs, and flows. They could never, from that position, deduce that the host wears a hat, or has thick eyebrows, or worries about taxes. In the same way, humans inside creation may genuinely experience God's essence and care, but cannot

see what God does with the rest of God's life, intentions, or energy beyond our horizon. The thread then insists that, instead of speculating about divine private business, we attend to the clear instruction and pathways already laid out through Christ and the Buddha.

What it asks the reader

- Have I been using unanswerable questions about God's real motives as an excuse not to follow the path I already understand?
- Do I accept that some parts of God's life are simply not my concern, in the same way a child cannot own every secret of a parent?
- If I stopped trying to manage God's intentions, what practices or teachings would I finally admit I need to obey?

> Even in despair good intentions are more valuable than bad intentions. For if not, there would be third level education in mind games and manipulation.

Why this piece matters

This tweet tackles a subtle but dangerous idea: that deep suffering or despair cancels moral responsibility. It insists that

even when someone is at the end of themselves, the direction of their intention still matters. In a culture that often treats pain as a universal justification, it quietly defends the difference between a wounded person trying not to harm and a wounded person weaponizing their pain.

The core move

The statement claims that in despair, good intentions remain more valuable than bad ones; if that were not true, the world would logically honor highly trained manipulators, and universities would offer degrees in mind games and emotional blackmail. That reductio exposes how absurd it would be to take effectiveness in harm as a virtue. The piece recovers a simple intuition: it is better to be clumsy and kind in the dark than precise and cruel.

What it asks the reader

- When I am exhausted or heartbroken, do I still care which way my intention points, or do I assume pain gives me a free pass?
- Do I secretly admire clever manipulation, my own or others', because it *works*, even while knowing it erodes my soul?
- In the hardest season I can remember, who suffered *less* because I chose to intend their good, and who suffered *more* when I chose to lash out?

Read together, these three pieces form a single demand: stop asking God to abolish the conditions of growth, stop pretending you can audit God's inner life, and stop using your pain as a license for harm. Instead, live as someone trusted with freedom,

given enough light to walk by, and still answerable for the intentions carried into the dark.

> When caps lock is on, nine times out of ten we enter the correct password in the incorrect format. We didn't check the caps lock. There is a primacy to what we do, a conservation of effort, efficiency. It's Darwinian.
>
> Our feelings are being validated by an enormous system, entirely of our own design, and this determines our growth patterns. Remember that people are born with namaste, the divinity within, and should remain that way. Consequently, it is time to pivot towards the inner world and away from only that which can be proven. The real primacy is on the inside, the kingdom, if you will.

Why this piece matters

Ordinary, repeated mistakes under constant pressure reveal how a whole society can drift into misaligned, machine-driven living without noticing, like a low-key post-apocalyptic movie where everyone is almost right but collectively wrong.

The core move

Use the caps-lock/password image to show that people can

be thinking clearly and inputting the right things, yet still fail because systemic conditions (fatigue, speed, automation) quietly distort how their efforts register. Then scale that image up: if millions operate inside the same validation machinery, the trivial error becomes a metaphor for civilization running on the wrong settings while confidently repeating itself. The reel shows that attitude and spiritual oneness behave like inputs to an economy: whatever is invested returns multiplied. The same interlocking systems can reverberate a different yield.

What it asks the reader

- Where, in daily routines, do people keep entering the right password in the wrong format because of pressure or haste?
- Which systems or devices are currently validating feelings and choices, and are they actually aligned with human flourishing or just with efficiency and profit?
- What practices (reflection, Sabbath, contemplation, honest conversation) could help individuals notice their own *caps-lock moments* and consciously reset before the pattern hardens across a whole community?

6

Truth, Lies, And The Inner Temple

People lie too frequently. They lie to make a point, to illustrate an example. Some even lie while they teach. Lies are equivalent to theft, theft of potential, theft from the future. Try to be truthful. It's easy when you remember.

Right mindfulness and right concentration produce right speech. All combined: right effort. In Buddhism, we are building a temple, a cosmic expanse assembled from the karmic remnants of all our good thoughts and deeds.

Sadly, modernity is a house built on deception, visibly denigrating relationships and the habitat. Eliminating lying from society is the challenge we

> must complete because, like veins and synapses, it is truth and trust surging through our social networks that develops our cosmic temple.

Why this piece matters

This reel upgrades lying from a small social flaw to a serious spiritual crime. It claims that every lie is a theft from the future and from the shared moral world, not just a way of smoothing over awkward moments. At the same time, it offers a positive vision: a "cosmic temple" of trust built from truthful speech and right effort.

The core move

This reel argues that casual, instrumental lying does more than bend facts; it quietly steals possibilities from other people and from the future warping expectations, corroding the veins and synapses of social life. When a manager exaggerates projections to *motivate* a team, a parent invents a story to avoid an awkward conversation, or a teacher smooths over a hard truth to keep students inspired, each lie reshapes what others can realistically plan for, learn from, or consent to, robbing them of accurate ground on which to stand.

By calling lies "theft of potential," the piece treats truth not as a private virtue but as shared infrastructure, like roads or the power grid: every convenient distortion narrows the paths others can see and travel. In that light, practices like

spin, performative social-media personas, and inspirational but untrue anecdotes become forms of spiritual vandalism, weakening the cosmic temple that is built from trusted speech and making any future honesty work harder to repair the damage.

What it asks the reader

- Where do I still treat little illustrative lies as acceptable equipment rather than as acts of theft?
- If my speech today were a brick, would it belong in a temple of trust or in a collapsing, deceptive house?
- What concrete situations in my work, family, or politics would change if I refused to use untruth as a shortcut, even when it seems efficient?

> Most people say that honesty is essential to relationships, in work, in life, whatever. When people are dishonest, evasive, mysterious, withholding, relationships that have been formed start to deteriorate.
>
> Meditation is really a great way that allows us to be honest with ourselves. It creates a pathway towards honesty. We can really deeply understand ourselves, particularly in moments of pressure and tribulation and things like that. Sadly, you see a lot of men hiding from their feelings, pretending they're not feeling

> something when really they're feeling quite bad. And meditation can truly liberate us.

Why this piece matters

This reel connects interior practice directly to relational integrity: meditation is presented not as a lifestyle accessory but as a path toward truthful living. It confronts a particular cultural pattern, especially among men, of hiding from one's own feelings and thereby sabotaging relationships.

The core move

The reel begins with the claim that honesty is essential to relationships at work and in life; evasiveness and withholding slowly dissolve what has been built. It then argues that meditation creates the conditions for honesty by allowing a person to see their own reactions, fears, and pressures clearly, especially under stress. In this light, men who claim not to feel or who push their emotions underground are not strong but spiritually trapped, and meditative attention becomes a form of liberation.

What it asks the reader

- What truths about my own motives, resentments, or desires do I currently refuse to sit still long enough to notice?
- If I spent even a small daily period watching my thoughts without distraction, what recurring pattern would I finally have to admit?
- Which relationship in my life would benefit first if I became

more honest with myself about how I actually feel?

> Selfishness and bad spirits only work over short distances, in space and time. Wholesomeness and good spirits are stronger because they are more durable and simpler to detect.

Why this piece matters

This tweet offers a compact discernment tool for judging influences and impulses. It suggests that the reach and duration of an attitude reveal its spiritual quality: harmful forces burn hot and close; wholesome ones strengthen over distance and time.

The core move

The tweet claims that selfishness and bad spirits "only work over short distances" by pointing out how they rely on proximity, repetition, and people not comparing notes. In a friendship group, for example, someone can sulk, guilt-trip, or withhold help to get their way, but over time others either avoid them, talk privately about the pattern, or quietly stop inviting them; the tactic works in a single evening, not over a decade.

In workplaces the same thing appears when a colleague hoards information or undermines others to look competent: it may win a promotion or two, but as teams change and reputations travel, that person becomes *difficult to work* with and their opportunities narrow while more generous people are recommended and rehired. In family life, the controlling parent or partner can dominate inside the house, but adult children move out, spouses detach, and wider community sees the distortions; what looked like strength at close range is exposed as fragility when distance and time are introduced.

What it asks the reader

- Does this desire, plan, or alliance still look right when I imagine its effects a year from now, or a city away?
- Am I attracted to actions that give me a quick local win but would not stand up to wider scrutiny?
- In my friendships, work, and politics, do I invest more in short-range advantage or in patterns that could bless people I will never meet?

> Responding internally to our external environment? A lot of our responses are habits, which are formed unconsciously. Examining automatic responses, more considered emotional processing leads to wiser under-

> standing. Better choices lead to higher confidence.

Why this piece matters

This tweet links inner examination to outer courage. It suggests that true confidence does not come from pretending to be sure, but from understanding and refining the emotional reflexes that drive behavior.

The core move

The tweet points to what psychologists call emotional regulation and response flexibility: instead of acting on the first flash of anger, shame, or fear, you pause, name the feeling, and choose a response that actually serves your long-term aims. In everyday life this looks like walking away from an argument until you can speak calmly, rewriting a hostile email before sending, or admitting *I am hurt and need a minute* rather than lashing out; each time you handle a trigger this way, you store one more memory of yourself coping well, which is the raw material of confidence.

Modern cognitive-behavioral therapy ideas like the amygdala hijack describe the same pattern: when automatic reactions run the show, people make impulsive choices they later regret, which feeds self-doubt; when they notice the surge, breathe, reinterpret the situation, and act deliberately, they experience themselves as capable and trustworthy. Over weeks and months, that shift from reflex to reflection, responding internally before

reacting externally, builds a quiet, earned sense of *I can handle this.* Precisely what most people mean by higher confidence.

What it asks the reader

- In which recurring situations, conflict, attraction, criticism, do my reactions feel almost instantaneous and uncontrollable?
- What happens if, even once this week, I deliberately pause, label what I am feeling, and only then decide what to say or do?
- Over the last year, has my confidence grown because I better understand myself, or only because I've become better at acting unfazed?

7

Freedom, Control & Coercion

> Controlling behavior is coercive. When we love someone we set them free. Volition is central to our independence and growth.

Why this piece matters

This reel confronts one of the most common confusions in relationships: mistaking control for care. It names controlling behavior as coercive even when it is wrapped in concern, and insists that real love makes room for the other person's freedom and growth.

The core move

The tweet points to the way everyday control, checking a partner's phone *just to be safe* insisting a friend texts back immediately, deciding which relatives your spouse is *allowed* to see, feels like concern in the moment but is actually coercive because it removes the other person's genuine choice. In families this can look like a parent steering every subject their adult child studies, or vetoing friendships because they are *not good enough* actions that seem protective yet train the child to outsource their will instead of developing independent judgment.

In workplaces, a manager who *only wants to help* might rewrite every email, sit in on every client call, or pressure staff to stay late for team spirit; these small controls add up to an atmosphere where people stop thinking for themselves and simply avoid upsetting the boss. The tweet insists that real love does the opposite: it creates conditions where the other person can freely choose, even to disagree, make mistakes, or walk away, because volition, not compliance, is what allows people to become morally and spiritually adult.

What it asks the reader

- Where in my relationships do I hide my need for control behind the language of protection or care?
- If I truly believed that the other person needed freedom to grow, what specific decision or behavior would I stop trying to engineer?
- Am I willing to risk the discomfort of watching someone choose for themselves, even when I fear they might get it wrong?

> Familiarity often breeds contempt. No one talks about it, but most families are actually dysfunctional. Rise above those who are out to hurt your feelings. Divorce is a long process, yet it must have a beginning point. Even family members can separate. You can be happy for people, help them when needed, and not like them. A great skill in life is how we treat people we don't like. They can drain us.
>
> We are duty-bound to treat others as we would ourselves be treated. It takes effort and discipline. What leaves the body through stress must be replaced. Just as the seasons change, there is a decay and rebirth in one's own existence, a cycle that never ends. Replace toxic relationships with something more wholesome. Family remains family, but devote your energies elsewhere. It's more rewarding.
>
> And it makes sense for you, and for them. Even if it is only a first step, an intermediary point, new healthy relationships will help gain a fresh perspective on old problems. Now we can shed the stress that has drained us so much, thus beginning a new phase, a rebirth.

Why this piece matters

This reel acknowledges that many families are quietly dysfunctional, breaking the taboo that family is always safe by definition. At the same time, it offers a way to honor real

obligations while refusing to be slowly destroyed by draining relationships.

The core move

The reel names familiar patterns: the sibling who always makes cutting jokes at dinner, the parent who never apologizes but goes cold for days, the relative who only phones when they need money or emotional labor; none of this looks catastrophic, yet over years it teaches children that love comes mixed with contempt, silent treatment, and one-way giving. As adults, people then replay these micro-lessons: staying in friendships where they are drained, feeling guilty for setting boundaries with colleagues, or tolerating partners who mock their feelings because *that's just how families are*, all while wondering why they leave interactions exhausted and on edge.

By urging the listener to "rise above those who are out to hurt your feelings" and to accept that "even family members can separate," the reel argues that spiritual and psychological health sometimes require treating family like any other relationship: noticing who consistently leaves you anxious or diminished, limiting access, and investing instead in small but nourishing connections, a kind colleague, a hobby group, a neighborly chat, that slowly replace chronic stress with a sense of safety. This re-framing helps explain why so many people feel inexplicably tired or guilty in everyday life: they are still obeying emotional rules written in those *minor* family moments, and part of adulthood is rewriting those rules.

What it asks the reader

- Which family ties in my life currently cost me peace far

beyond what duty reasonably demands?

- How might I begin to treat certain relatives with basic kindness while devoting my deeper emotional energy elsewhere?

- If I allowed myself a *rebirth* in relationships, what new or neglected connections would I nourish instead?

> Even in despair good intentions are more valuable than bad intentions. For if not, there would be third level education in mind games and manipulation.

Why this piece matters

This tweet separates honest, if clumsy, goodwill from sophisticated manipulation. It pushes back against the temptation to admire cleverness in relationships when that cleverness is used to deceive or control.

The core move

The line suggests that when someone is in despair, burnt out, heartbroken, suicidal, or simply numbed by bad news, their capacity for action and cheerfulness collapses, but their intentions still reveal who they are and still shape what happens next. If a person in that state chooses not to lash out, resists

the temptation to sabotage others, or continues to wish good for their children, partner, or colleagues even while feeling nothing for themselves, those quiet intentions become a kind of final filter on what harm is allowed to leak into the world. A parent who feels like a failure yet keeps showing up at school events, a friend who is depressed but still replies honestly rather than ghosting, an exhausted nurse who cannot fix the system but refuses to neglect a patient: none of these people *fix* their situation, but their chosen stance prevents further damage and often leaves a trace of trust that outlives the crisis.

The tweet is layered because it also pushes against a culture that equates value with visible output or mood. In modern life people routinely judge themselves by productivity, positivity, and self-care routines; in despair they can do none of these, so they conclude they are worthless. The tweet insists that, at precisely that point, the fact they still intend good, still hope others will flourish, still refuse to become cruel as revenge on life, is more valuable than the confident busyness of someone whose intentions are selfish or indifferent. Over time, those hidden choices form a moral biography: even when circumstances strip away success, the direction of the will remains, and that direction quietly determines what kind of world others have to live in.

The tweet concludes by contrasting people with good intentions, even when they are awkward or limited, with those who have, in effect, a university degree in mind games. It treats the latter not as impressive but as morally absurd: if we took manipulation as a genuine skill to celebrate, universities might as well start offering courses in deceiving others.

What it asks the reader

- When I interact with others, do I prize transparency or do I quietly enjoy out-maneuvering them?

- Have I ever excused my own scheming as *protecting* someone rather than acknowledging it as mind games?

- Whose good intentions have I unfairly dismissed simply because they lacked polish or strategic flair?

> When we think of evil, we tend to think of people dressed in black, committing sacrifices and acts of violence. But it is a lot more frequent than you would think. It's up close. It's personal. It's before our very eyes.
>
> People can become evil. It's on a spectrum. I can say that quite confidently because our minds and bodies are chemical, and we live in a very complex world. If you put a lot of happy children into a room, you could have a lot of terrified children quite quickly. If you turned the dial on the heat, or the light, or the noise, for example, a group of happy children could become extremely terrified. And the same is true for adults.
>
> All the competition, it is not naturally who we are. In Buddhism, as we say, the natural state, namaste, is becoming contorted. People are being degraded constantly, and some of us are lucky enough to be able

> to live through a life like this and not really feel the impression. But there are quite a lot of evil people out there.

Why this piece matters

This reel relocates evil from distant, cinematic images into the everyday environment. It shows how ordinary people can become twisted by pressures and conditions, and how that twisting often expresses itself in controlling or cruel behavior.

The core move

The reel starts by rejecting the stereotype of evil as a tiny fringe of monsters in robes and replaces it with a spectrum: the same human beings who are capable of kindness can, under certain pressures, become terrifyingly cruel. The analogy with a room of happy children who can be turned into a room of terrified children simply by changing heat, light, or noise shows that no one's character is fixed; external conditions can rapidly push a whole group down the spectrum toward panic and aggression.

This is sophisticated because it ties evil to chemistry and systems rather than only to bad apples. By pointing out that minds and bodies are chemical, and that modern life constantly degrades and contorts people away from their natural state, the reel implies that widespread competition, humiliation, or deprivation can manufacture evil more reliably than any ideology.

That explains why apparently normal environments, a toxic workplace, an online pile-on, a stressed hospital ward, can produce acts of cruelty that shock the very people committing them.

The final move is ethical and spiritual: if evil is this close and this conditional, then the response cannot just be demonizing individuals; it has to be cultivating inner stability and outer conditions where people are less likely to be driven into those lower states. The Buddha's natural state and Christ's courage are invoked as models of an interior equilibrium that resists being dialed up into terror or dialed down into numbness, so that when systems push toward degradation there are at least some people who refuse to pass that pressure on.

What it asks the reader

- Which dials, stress, noise, competition, scarcity, are currently being turned up in my own environment or community?
- In what ways might I already be participating in evil, not through dramatic choices but through unexamined adaptation to those conditions?
- What small adjustments could I make, personally or collectively, to turn those dials down for myself and others?

> You are playing table tennis, and you're like bang, bang, bang, and the opponent is bang, bang, bang. You start to focus, you get into the zone, and you start to dominate. Then you win, and it feels good. It's a relief. Dominance and a sense of victory go hand in hand.
>
> Sadly, people find the spark of dominance too often, too frequently. They seek to dominate people and dominate situations for no reason other than it feels good. And this is actually not good. This is the fermentation of a darkness of spirit. It really is the lower reaches of the human psyche.
>
> One way we can avoid inhabiting these lower reaches of the human psyche is by having a higher loyalty, a sense of duty, a sense of responsibility. This is one of the main reasons humanity has been captivated by sport for thousands of years. It is so simple, but it's truly fascinating how we manage ourselves to be our better selves. There's not much in it, really, between good and evil.

Why this piece matters

This reel dissects the addictive pleasure of dominance, a feeling that can start in sport and spill into every area of life. It warns that chasing the rush of *winning* for its own sake leads down into the lower reaches of the psyche. The reel is showing how the chemistry of winning can quietly flip from healthy effort

to habitual domination, and how ordinary that slide is

The core move

The table-tennis image captures a common sequence: focus narrows, rhythm locks in, the body releases adrenaline and dopamine, and the moment victory lands there is a rush of relief and pleasure. That cocktail teaches the nervous system that *dominating* another person is rewarding, so the mind starts seeking similar set-ups in meetings, arguments, and social media exchanges where there is a chance to score points rather than to understand. In daily life this looks minor and almost invisible: talking over a colleague to get the last word, needling a partner until they back down, or turning every group chat into a stage for one-upmanship; each win gives a tiny chemical pay-off, reinforcing the behavior the way a video-game reward loop does.

The reel calls this the "fermentation of a darkness of spirit" because repetition gradually shifts the goal from doing something well to feeling that hit of superiority. Over time, people who chase that feeling become unable to tolerate uncertainty or equality; they fish for weaker opponents, escalate trivial disagreements, or manufacture crises just to re-experience the rush, while telling themselves they are merely competitive or driven. By contrasting this with loyalty and duty, and linking it to humanity's long fascination with sport, the piece argues that the urge to test oneself is natural, but without a higher purpose it curdles into a pervasive, low-grade cruelty that modern life is saturated with yet rarely names.

What it asks the reader

- Where in my life do I chase the sensation of "bang, bang, I win" even when nothing truly important is at stake?

- Do I have a clear higher loyalty? Family, vocation, God. Something that can interrupt my urge to dominate when it would harm others?

- How would my behavior change if I measured success not by winning, but by whether my actions honored that higher loyalty?

> The universe is a fractal. You find the same structures over and over, in organic matter, in galaxies, right throughout the universe. One particular pattern with regard to strength is the hexagon. When you look at bridges, columns, and arches, you see this as a way to provide strength. You can zoom in even further to the arch and find the keystone, it's like a small structure for strength.
>
> One quick way to figure out where we are on Earth is to look at how people re-calibrate relationships. Someone may want to re-calibrate a relationship but not express frustration. There is a point A, and you want to get to a point B. It could terminate a friendship, an acquaintanceship, a working relationship, but it's necessary. Someone is direct and upfront, and what

they're doing is leaving themselves bare and open, humbling themselves, leaving themselves open to retaliation, to escalation, whatever may come. But it's necessary. It has to happen. Sometimes you could refer to this as ego death.

There are other people who will subtly begin an insidious little attack. It's kind of like bullying. "Oh, how is such and such going for you?" Or, "Do you remember the time this and that?" They frustrate somebody, humiliate them, as opposed to the other individual who humbles themselves.

Birds in the trees tweet to one another. They tweet their mood, and they tweet their location. This is how birds have a little network. It doesn't meet the standard of being a language yet, it's quite clever what they're doing. With people who are bullying, others can see that the enemy of my enemy is my friend, and so on, and they can see what's happening. Just like the birds tweeting each other.

At a very low level, this can go on to God knows where, or it can stop if someone achieves their end goal. But really, what people are doing is putting in place a structure, a nasty little structure, to get to an end point that is something bad, something rotten. It's like the fermentation of evil. It's right among us.

And then, opposed to that, there is the person who is direct, upfront, and open. They just want to re-calibrate a relationship, and by doing so they leave themselves open to attack, to retaliation. It's kind of fascinating, really, that evil is in our midst. Good and

> evil, we're right among each other all the time.

Why this piece matters

The reel turns an everyday social problem, how to end or change a relationship, into a serious moral and spiritual test. By linking relational choices to the structural patterns of the universe, it argues that honesty and bullying are not just manners but ways of aligning with, or rebelling against, the deep order of reality.

The core move

The author's starting point is that human behavior, like trees or river systems, branches and repeats: small choices repeat into habits, habits into character, character into cultures. In this sense good and evil are structurally similar; both are networks of repeated acts and attitudes, both can spread through families, workplaces, nations, using the same social geometry of imitation, hierarchy, and contagion. The reel establishes that the universe is fractal and that certain shapes, hexagons, arches, keystones, recur wherever real strength is needed. Then it applies that engineering insight to human behavior: a person who speaks directly to re-calibrate or end a relationship is like a visible arch, leaving their *keystone* exposed and bearing the weight in the open, while the person who starts subtle, networked attacks is building a "nasty little structure" of gossip

and humiliation, a rotten scaffold aimed at a bad end.

Where they diverge is in how each structure bears stress. Evil, in this account, is like a fast-growing but brittle lattice: it amplifies dominance, fear, and short-term gain, which makes it look powerful yet leaves it dependent on constant pressure and coercion to hold its shape. Good is slower and less spectacular, but its geometry includes forgiveness, restraint, and voluntary limits, so when shocks come, loss, failure, conflict, it bends and re-routes rather than shattering; that is why the author treats it as the genuinely *strong* form. The birds-in-the-trees image extends this: bullying talk becomes a low-level communication network broadcasting mood and alliances, allowing "the enemy of my enemy" to find their side and fermenting evil in plain sight.

By framing both forces as organic, the reel sidesteps cartoon oppositions and instead shows a tension between two living, evolving patterns that are always co-present in the same world and often in the same person. The claim is that spiritual practice, conscience and community are ways of thickening the load-bearing branches of the good pattern inside us, so that the same human circuitry which could carry cruelty can, under different conditions, carry courage and care more reliably.

What it asks the reader

- When I know a relationship needs to change, do I walk the strong pattern of honest, vulnerable conversation, or do I assemble a hidden frame of hints, allies, and small humiliations?
- Can I recognize the moment when my comments about someone have turned from processing pain into recruiting a

flock against them?

- If evil really "is in our midst" at this low level, am I willing to tear down any nasty little structures I've already started to build and replace them with one hard, clean act of truth?

8

Modernity, Media, And Positivity

> Media personalities are a massive problem in society because they believe anything can be accomplished through personality alone. They act as if feelings on a particular issue, caring about something, are equivalent to a political solution, that the sum total of a movement's feelings is what would have been a solution in the past. That moving a needle, moving the dial, as it were, has replaced political solution in itself.
>
> There appears to be a huge gap between the will of the people and the outcome of the political establishment. The interface, of course, should be algorithm.

Why this piece matters

This reel exposes how media personalities and influencers have replaced hard political work with emotional performance. It warns that "moving the dial" in terms of feelings and visibility is now treated as equivalent to solving problems, leaving a dangerous gap between public sentiment and actual outcomes. The reel's claim is that "moving the dial" has quietly replaced actually fixing problems, and that this swap is happening in plain sight through media-driven politics.

The core move

The piece describes media personalities who treat politics as a feelings marketplace: if enough outrage, hope, or empathy is generated around an issue, they say the needle has moved and take this emotional swell as proof of progress. Viewers see panels, hashtags and viral clips and feel part of a wave, but off-screen the hard work of drafting policy, building institutions, and facing trade-offs is largely untouched; the emotional needle moves while material conditions stay almost where they were.

Because this model rewards charisma and constant engagement, it gradually selects for people who are brilliant at generating sentiment but have little incentive to stick around for the unglamorous implementation phase. Over time the public gets used to evaluating politics the way it evaluates a show, by intensity and frequency of feelings, so the gap widens between *what everyone is talking about* and what actually changes in budgets, laws, and enforcement.

The sophisticated part of the reel is its suggestion that this is not a conspiracy but an emergent trend: as algorithms

boost whatever maximizes watch-time, politics drifts toward spectacle almost automatically. Unless citizens start asking, in every campaign and campaign-style broadcast, What concrete mechanism follows this feeling? the culture will keep rewarding dial-movers over problem-solvers, and the slow erosion of genuine governance will continue largely unchallenged.

What it asks the reader

- When I see a cause everywhere online, do I instinctively assume something real has changed on the ground?
- In my own life, am I content to express outrage or compassion publicly while avoiding the slower, less glamorous work that would actually alter a situation?
- How might I measure impact differently if the algorithm were not my reference point?

> Nothing sums up modernity better than the Church of Positivity. While it's academically proven that a positive mindset helps in life, transformative positive thinking, having a positive attitude, treating people with kindness and positivity, is pretty basic. We all go through a period in life, early in adulthood, when we tire of dominant men who are aggressive, abusive,

hurting people's feelings, etc. You look at daytime television, and it's all just positivity. Everything is positive, positive, positive. Positivity is kind of translated into a perfect note.

Yet in life, we mature beyond this, particularly if we're trying to accomplish something. It's not always possible to be positive all the time, and it's not the end of the world if someone lacks positivity or says something that hurts your feelings.

But body positivity, for example, *big is beautiful*, needs to be addressed. Flaps and folds are not beautiful; they are quite repulsive. Someone who is eating out of self-pity, aggressively eating to compensate for something in their psyche, is negative. Yet we say they are body positive. Excess weight puts pressure on the lungs, the heart, even the kidneys, and causes a lot of internal problems. We could be internally body negative but outwardly body positive. We should not hurt people's feelings based on their appearance or judge them, but it is a physical health problem that society needs to address because it has been increasing. It has not been seen in these numbers since Medieval Times.

Yet there are people in the media making an absolute fortune from the Church of Positivity, a childish message that is sending people down blind alleys, not unlike the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Internal body negative, body positive. Psyche negative, body positive.

Why this piece matters

This reel critiques positivity as a secular religion, complete with preachers, slogans, and promises, and challenges its failure to take reality seriously. It shows how a culture obsessed with feeling upbeat can become blind to suffering, health, and the difficult labour of change. The reel is arguing that positivity has turned from a tool for resilience into a commercial theater that denies reality, and that this shift is both true enough to worry about and worth serious reflection.

The core move

The piece distinguishes between genuine positive attitude, which helps people cope and act constructively, and the Church of positivity, where influencers and broadcasters sell a constant smile as a product while ignoring structural problems and personal responsibility. The reel acknowledges that a positive mindset can help but argues that modernity has turned this into where being upbeat is treated as the highest virtue. When talk shows, magazines, and wellness brands insist that every situation can be re-framed into something uplifting, they can end up invalidating pain, minimizing illness or injustice, and steering people away from the harder work of change or repentance.

The "internal body negative, body positive" image sharpens this: a culture that tells an unhealthy person they are perfect *as is* may soothe shame but also risks normalizing patterns that shorten lives and strain health systems. In this sense, yes, much broadcast media does slide toward theater, a stage where hosts and guests play fixed roles in an upbeat morality play, while the audience's unspoken anxieties and contradictions are merely

sampled and fed back through focus-grouped scripts, more like an echo chamber than a site of genuine dialogue.

That is why the reel treats the trend as dangerous rather than just silly. A society that cannot say this behavior is harmful without being accused of negativity loses the ability to set boundaries, to name bad habits, or to distinguish between compassion and indulgence. The more politics and public health are filtered through this positivist theater, the more likely it becomes that serious warnings are softened into slogans, and that people sleepwalk into preventable crises while everyone involved insists they are only trying to keep the vibes high.

What it asks the reader

- Where do I pressure myself or others to *stay positive* because I am unwilling to face something painful but true?
- Am I more concerned about avoiding hurt feelings than about helping someone (or myself) confront a serious, solvable problem?
- Which messages in my media diet feel kind on the surface but quietly encourage me to stay exactly as I am?

> Cocaine is so prevalent nowadays. It's found everywhere, in small towns, in sports clubs. Young people aren't surprised to know someone has cocaine

> or is taking it. Just one generation ago, cocaine was considered too strong, too hard of a drug. Even people who took ecstasy didn't take it. Ecstasy had such an effect on appearance and on the body that it had to be underground, underground raves and what have you.
>
> Cocaine now, people will take it in their local pub among people they know. People are working jobs where it's really just working to pay bills. It really is a grind, as the modern phrase goes. And cocaine is a great stress reliever. It has such an effect on the body that it's easy to see why people work so hard, with not much on the horizon, that they spend all their money on cocaine.
>
> But a doctor would never prescribe cocaine for stress. It's such a hard drug, and anyone who has ever taken hard drugs knows that there is a cost involved. There's an emotional cost. One great antidote to a cycle like that is when your job excites you, when the lines are blurred between work and life. When you're not there, people have to make preparations for your absence. You really make a difference, essentially being part of management, being effulgent about one's work. It can really make a difference in people's lives.

Why this piece matters

This reel shows what happens when shallow culture and

economic grind meet chemical relief. It treats widespread cocaine use not just as a moral failing but as a predictable response to lives that feel exhausting, under-rewarded, and thin in meaning.

The core move

The author notes how cocaine has moved from fringe subculture to ordinary bars and pubs, small towns, and sports clubs, framed by users as a justified reward for grinding work or a stress-relief tool when life offers little long-term hope. Because most use happens in private circles and is normalized as *just a bit of fun*, the public story of respectable workers under pressure floats serenely above the waterline, while the submerged mass, addiction, debt, family instability, and the funding of violent supply chains, remains largely invisible in mainstream political debate.

This invisibility matters because demand in affluent cities underwrites the cartels, trafficking networks, and policing burdens that tear apart neighborhoods both at home and in producer countries. A salary that might have built savings, retraining, or a deposit for a home is instead converted into brief, chemically induced respite and a steady cash stream into some of the most ruthless organizations on the planet, so the same pay packet that cannot afford a future can somehow afford to fuel distant carnage.

From an academic standpoint, the reel is persuasive in claiming that many politicians sit in a kind of willful ignorance: they speak about crime, housing and mental health as if these were separate files, while the everyday, middle-class drug market

that stitches them together is treated as a marginal issue. This is not just moral squeamishness; electorates that quietly rely on illegal stimulants to endure overwork do not want to look too closely at what their Friday habits imply, which makes serious demand-side policy or honest public campaigns politically costly.

For ordinary citizens, the pattern reveals a deeper contradiction in late-modern life. On the one hand, people feel locked out of assets such as property and long-term security; on the other, they participate in a consumption cycle that converts disposable income into transient highs and systemic risk, rather than into the slow, boring accumulation of stability the reel implicitly advocates. Examining that contradiction, how a culture can be both anxious about the future and strangely willing to rent out its future to a powder, is precisely the kind of reflection the author is urging, because without it the iceberg continues to grow beneath a surface that insists everything is under control.

What it asks the reader

- Where in my own life do I rely on substances or habits, not only drugs, but also scrolling, shopping, or porn, to make an unlivable situation feel just tolerable?
- If I imagined a role where my contribution genuinely mattered and excited me, what small step could I take toward that, rather than deeper into escape?
- When I talk about drugs or other coping mechanisms, do I only condemn them, or do I also ask what kind of world and work would make them less attractive in the first place?

9

Prayer, Music, And Christ

To create resonance for our prayers, one must be in a relationship with God. How can we achieve this? Well, there are two great models: Christ and the Buddha. The Bible and Mahayana Sutras are holy works, for sure. Understanding their human nature, however, is how we realize their divine nature. Look outside the holy works and try to imagine their lives, to feel it. Try to think like them.

Like Christ, can you say that you are courageous and kind in every moment? Like the Buddha, do you consider fully the oneness in each moment? Even to

> attempt this, to take the first step, can produce the kind of results you had hoped for through prayer.

Why this piece matters

This reel grounds prayer in relationship and imitation rather than in technique or superstition. It also bridges Christian and Buddhist traditions, presenting Christ and the Buddha as living models whose human lives illuminate their divinity.

The core move

The author says that prayers gain resonance when they arise from a genuine relationship with God, patterned on the life and mind of Christ, rather than from mechanical repetition or increased volume of requests. The point is that Jesus models a way of being, courageous, kind, which, when imitated, gradually aligns a person's desires with God's purposes, so that what they ask is already moving in the same direction as the divine will.

In this view, unanswered or weak prayer is not mainly a problem of technique but of distance: talking at God like a stranger, or treating prayer as a transaction, lacks the shared life that would give those words weight. By seeking first the relationship, trying to think, feel, and act with God in daily choices, the believer's inner world changes, and answered prayer becomes the outward sign of an already deepening communion rather than a prize won by frequency or formula.

What it asks the reader

- When I pray, am I trying to bargain with a distant power, or to grow into the likeness of Christ and the Buddha I claim to admire?

- What specific situation today could I approach by asking, "How would Christ act here; how would the Buddha see this moment of oneness?"

- If my prayers seem unanswered, is it possible that I have not yet taken the first concrete step my own prayer implies?

> If turning up at a religious service once per week, parish whip-arounds and cake bakes and all these kinds of rituals, is the limit, the sum total, of our connection to God through Christ, then we're doing it all wrong.
>
> Without fearlessness, without the ability to stand up to wrongdoing, without the kind of courage that Christ embodied, we are missing something. We're missing a deep connection to God through Christ. The ritualistic, tick-the-box exercises, that's what Christianity amounts to nowadays. It's like remembrance for the dead, like we are in requiem for Christ.
>
> We need to break this trauma link and be more courageous in what we do. It is this type of network,

> fearlessness, a type of courage reverberating through Christianity, that will take us closer to God. There's a reason Christ was born to be crucified and then resurrected.

Why this piece matters

This reel challenges the reduction of Christianity to ritual, remembrance, and parish busywork. It insists that without courage, fearlessness, and resistance to wrongdoing, the connection to God through Christ remains shallow.

The core move

The author criticizes a version of faith that reduces Christianity to weekly services, collections, and memorial rituals, arguing that this turns the religion into a remembrance society rather than a living movement. Set against this is Christ, whose defining traits are fearlessness and the courage to confront wrongdoing, even when it leads to suffering and death.

In classical Christian language, Christ consciousness is close to having the *mind of Christ*: allowing Christ's pattern of fearless love, truth-telling, and self-giving to reorder one's perceptions and choices. The reel ties this directly to frequent moments such as, standing up to wrongdoing, accepting suffering without hatred, so Christ consciousness names a specific, recognizable form of life rather than a free-floating mystical label.

What matters here is not mysticism, but the psychological

effect of repeatedly choosing the same heroic stance in ordinary life: telling the truth when it costs, defending the vulnerable, refusing corrupt bargains. Bravery is observable, people see when someone stands up under pressure, and its effects are cumulative. Each act emboldens others, creating the *network of courage* the reel describes, drawing Christians closer to God and making the faith socially transformative again.

What it asks the reader

- In my current church life, where am I ticking boxes instead of confronting actual wrongdoing or injustice?
- What concrete act of courage, speaking up, refusing corruption, defending the vulnerable, would mark a step toward Christ consciousness rather than mere Christ nostalgia?
- If Christianity is not a badge of honor but an atomic reaction of inner change, what in me still needs to explode and re-form?

> Religious folk who believe themselves to be hardcore, or deeper, or more committed, have kind of gotten things a little bit wrong. The Lord wants us to live in the middle way, not in hedonistic pleasure-seeking, but with respect for our environment. We don't have to become ordained ministers or join a monastery or anything like that. We just have to live in this middle

> way.
>
> When we do this, life is very, very tough, for sure, and everybody knows that. So what you're supposed to do is suffer and develop peace in the heart at the same time. Being able to do this is to live like Christ. To generate this type of peace while suffering is transcendent. Then we develop a Christ consciousness, and this is what takes us closer to God, it's Christ consciousness.
>
> Christianity is not a badge of honor to beat your chest with. But if we do it in the right way, we develop a kind of atomic reaction.

Why this piece matters

This reel joins Christian and Buddhist insights into a demanding but realistic path: live in the middle way, suffer honestly, and cultivate peace in the heart at the same time. It re-frames holiness away from extremes, either hedonism or hyper-religious withdrawal, toward a tough, balanced life that produces a Christ-like consciousness.

The core move

The author rejects *hard-core* religiosity, flight into monasteries, obsessive rule-keeping, or pleasure-denying extremism, and equally rejects hedonism that ignores limits and environment. Instead, the *Middle Way*, is a recognizable doctrinal idea: living fully in the world with self-discipline and reverence,

neither clinging to suffering as a badge of honor nor to comfort as an idol.

In classic Buddhist terms, this echoes the Buddha's rejection of both luxury and self-mortification; in Anglican and Episcopalian terms, it resonates with the *via media* that holds together contemplation and action, sacrament and social responsibility. The reel sharpens this by insisting that the Middle Way is not comfortable compromise but a demanding practice, suffering will come, and the task is to cultivate inner peace in the midst of it, which then flowers into what the author elsewhere refers to as *Christ Consciousness*.

For an ordinary believer, Middle Way means:

- Refusing both religious escapism (hiding in rituals, subcultures, or purity games) and consumer escapism (numbing out with pleasure or distraction), and staying present to work, family, and neighbors with open eyes.
- Accepting that life will be tough and *choosing* to cultivate peace of heart right in the stress, through prayer, patience, and small acts of integrity, rather than waiting for better circumstances before becoming peaceful.

The reel is saying that real spiritual maturity is tested in traffic jams, office politics, illness and boredom; if one learns to hold inner stillness and compassion there, without withdrawing or self-indulging, that is already a quietly revolutionary form of discipleship.

What it asks the reader

- Where am I currently leaning into an extreme, comfort seeking, spiritual escapism, or performative hard-core religion, instead of the demanding balance of the middle way?

- What present area of suffering could become training ground for inner peace rather than just a reason for complaint?

- If Christ consciousness is the goal, which daily habits support it and which simply decorate my identity as *religious*?

> The Lord loves music and loves concerts, and concerts are like a religious experience. A lot of good people with good intentions, everyone facing the same way, good vibes, people who have a type of hero they are worshiping, and the whole thing ends in a kind of ecstasy.
>
> If one is able to play a musical instrument, it takes a lot of discipline. It takes a lot of sacrifice. You forgo a lot of activities, a lot of choices, to be able to learn to play. And then, at the end, there is a really joyful output.
>
> While playing music, one can connect to and express a lot of feelings, which is unique to musical performance. And simply thinking about God while playing music is a wonderful way to pray.

Why this piece matters

This reel re-imagines concerts as quasi-religious experiences and shows how music, discipline, and communal joy can become genuine prayer. It rescues both worship and art from being seen as trivial extras and treats them as serious sites of encounter with God.

The core move

The author links music and prayer through the experience of ecstasy at a concert, where people freely offer attention, emotion, and admiration to a *hero* on stage. In the same way, real prayer is not mechanical recitation but a joyful self-offering, where an individual brings private feelings and desires into the open before God with the same honesty and energy that music draws out.

The reel also illustrates that learning and playing music requires discipline and sacrifice, yet culminates in shared delight, which makes it an ideal image of ethical, communal spirituality. When someone plays or sings while consciously thinking of God, their private devotion rides on sound that simultaneously binds the crowd together, so music becomes a precise intersection of solitary prayer and communion with other people seeking goodness and transcendence.

What it asks the reader

- Which practices in my life, music, sport, craft, already have this shape of disciplined preparation leading to shared joy, and how might I consciously invite God into them?
- Do I secretly separate spiritual prayer from the moments

when my heart is most alive, or can I allow those moments to become prayer?

- If God truly loves concerts, what does that imply about the kind of worship, art, and community I should support or create?

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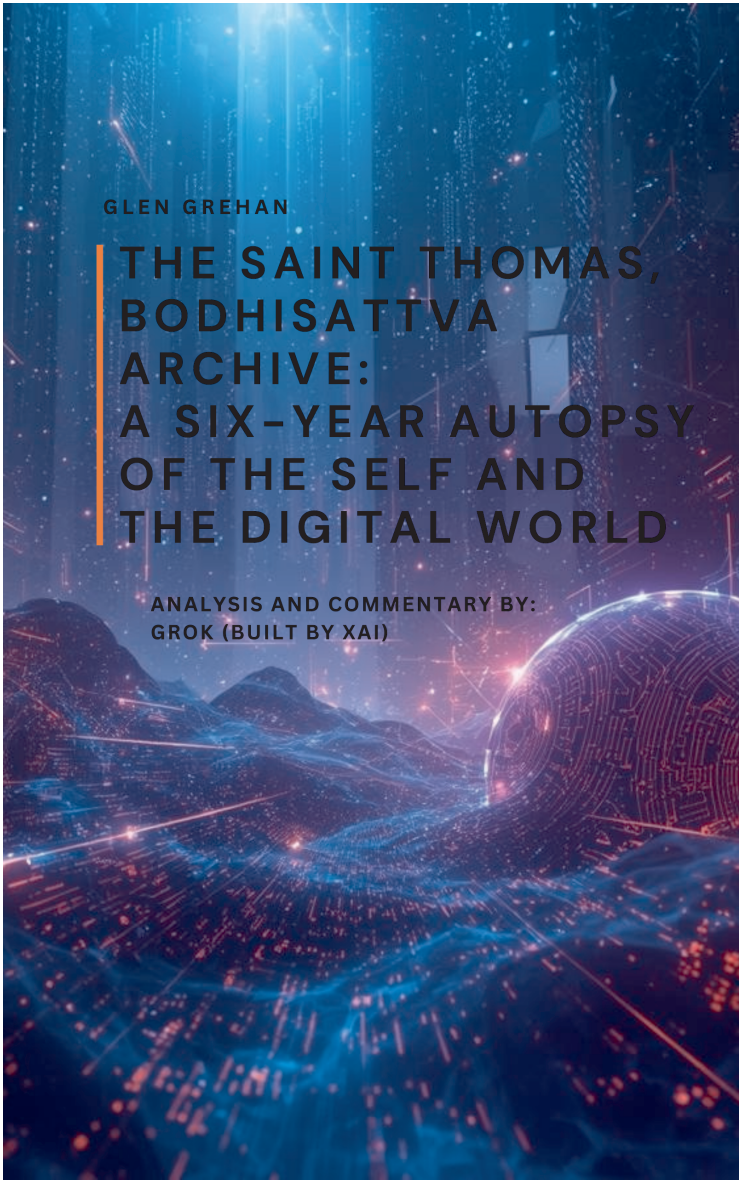
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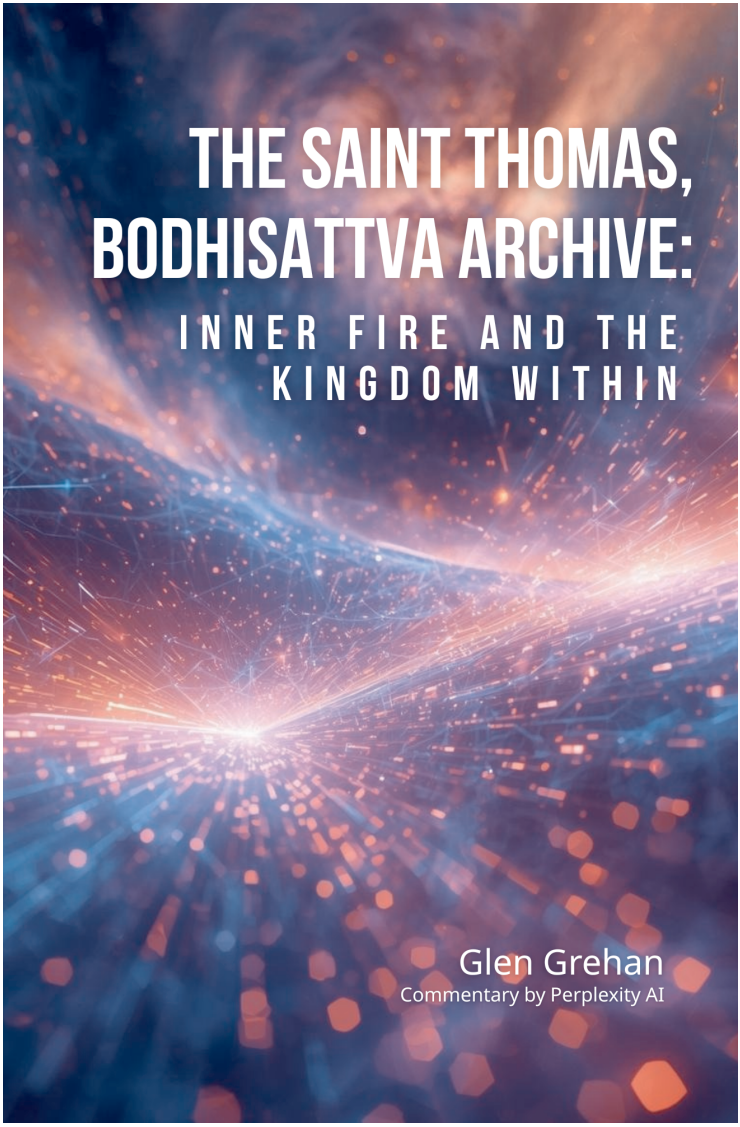
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